

parade 'Tis the season

Local towns
getting in the
holiday spirit

Christmas parades set to kick off next week

BY NORM CANNADA
THE JOURNAL

SENECA —
Thanksgiving is just two days away, and Christmas parades in the local area will quickly follow, with some parades likely coming before all the leftovers from Thursday are consumed.

Eight parades are scheduled in the area, with several of those happening next week.

NOV. 26
SENECA

Seneca's Christmas kickoff celebration is set to begin at 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 26, at Norton Thompson Park with the Lighting of the Park and tree lighting ceremony. The lights in the park will be significantly different than past years, with the unveiling of new lights, decorations, music and a 32-foot Christmas tree, a \$75,000 upgrade this holiday season.

Seneca events coordinator

Riley Johnson said the event in the park will come before the 6 p.m. parade.

"It's all added to the excitement and enthusiasm of our annual Christmas parade," Johnson said. "It's just going to kick it off and make it fun for the whole family. I think it will be something the city will be proud of."

Parade organizer Julian Davis said more than 100 entries are already signed

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PARADES: Eight events scheduled across area

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up for the parade, whose theme will be "150 Years of Christmas in Oconee." Donnie Cain, who has worn the suit and "stood in" for Santa Claus at the parade for many years, is the grand marshal for this year's parade.

NOV. 29 WESTMINSTER

The Westminster Christmas parade is scheduled for 6 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 29, and organizer Anita Ridley said participants will start lining up around 4 p.m. Unlike other area parades, Westminster does not pre-register entrants.

Ridley said the "small-town feel" of the parade makes it special.

"The town really enjoys it — they really get into it," she said. "They decorate their floats and put their all into it. A lot of them dress up as different characters. With the small-town feel, we have tractors and horses in the parade."

Following the parade, there will be a Christmas tree lighting ceremony at Retreat Street Park.

DEC. 1 SIX MILE

The 48th annual Six Mile Christmas parade is planned for Saturday, Dec. 1, at 10:30 a.m., according to organizer Diane Bowen. Participants will start lining up after 9 a.m.

Bowen said the crowd the parade draws and "at least 15 horses" participating make the Six Mile event special.

"We probably have at least 4,000 people come out and watch the parade," Bowen said. "The town really comes out and supports the parade."

I think people really love seeing the horses. We're one of the few towns that still has the horses."

She added that the horses are brought to the parade by people "who are born and bred in Six Mile and have horses."

WALHALLA

Later in the day on Dec. 1, the Walhalla Christmas parade will be held at 5 p.m.

Walhalla City Councilman Joshua Roberts said the parade brings the people of the city together.

"Everybody comes together — churches especially come together for the parade," he said.

After the parade, there will be a Christmas tree lighting ceremony and a live nativity on the green next to Arby's downtown.

"It's going to be a live nativity with animals and people — it will be pretty neat," Roberts said. "I think this is the first time we've done this."

DEC. 2 SALEM

The Salem Christmas parade is set for Dec. 2 at 4 p.m., with participants lining up beginning at 3 p.m. at Eagle Ridge School.

The parade will run through the town and end at the post office, according to town administrative assistant Wendy Nichols.

DEC. 4 CLEMSON

The Clemson Christmas parade is planned for Dec. 4, beginning at 6 p.m. on College Avenue. Dot and Bruce Yandle will serve as grand marshals.

"They've lived in Clemson for almost 50 years and moved from Atlanta in 1969," city program director Lindsey Watley said. "They have three children here in Clemson. Dot is a writer, and Bruce is an economist and retired Clemson profes-

sor. They've served our city well, and we like to highlight citizens who've really contributed to the community."

Pre-parade activities will run for an hour before the parade.

"We'll have cookie decorating stations and hot cocoa for everybody," Watley said. "We'll also have a DJ from 5-5:50 p.m."

"It's a way to celebrate the community during the holiday season and get everybody together and have a good, positive experience."

DEC. 7 CENTRAL

The Central Christmas parade is set for 6:30 p.m. Dec. 7, according to Elijah Reynolds, one of the event's organizers. Participants will begin lining up at 5:30 p.m. Preregistration is being offered this year. For more information about registering early, contact

over next few weeks

Isaiah Reynolds at (864) 303-0863.

Elijah Reynolds said the event being held at night is one of the things that will make this year's parade special.

"For years and years and all my life, it's always been on a Saturday afternoon," he said. "This is the second year, and we're hoping we'll get a little more participation. We're trying to encourage all the businesses this year to decorate their storefronts and trying to get more people to do lights."

The city will also offer a movie after the parade.

DEC. 8 FAIR PLAY

The Fair Play Christ-

mas parade is set for 1 p.m. Dec. 8, with a rain date of Dec. 15. Participants can line up beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Yoder's parking lot. The parade will run to Beaverdam Baptist Church.

Fire Chief Larry Wilkerson said the rural feel of the parade makes it unique.

"It's in the daytime, and we allow folks to drive whatever they want to through the parade," he said. "It's out in the country, not in the city. We do allow them to throw candy. We've got 12-18 people along the parade route for safety to try to make sure nothing unsafe occurs."

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